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The Revolt Against Irreligion

Pioneers in American Music

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CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE, *by Heinrich Hofmann*

The Revolt Against Irreligion

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Excitement always is to be found in joining a revolt. To stand by the status quo, to defend the established order, seems dull and tame, but to rebel against it is exciting. Youth habitually is in revolt against something, and any one who with sympathetic retrospect examines his own youth sees that in large measure that is due to the sheer zest and relish of revolt itself. Rebellion is a stimulant. It quickens the pace and heightens the gusto of living.

So far as religion is concerned, the advantage of revolt in recent years has been on the side of the disbelievers. They have been the rebels. Against an established religious status quo they raised insurrection. Like the opposition party in a government, without assuming responsibility themselves, they pressed their attack against the religious party in power, and the zest that belongs to rebellion was theirs. Come, they said, let us revolt against the tyrannies, obscurantisms, and repressions of religion!

Today, however, the situation rapidly changes. In these latter years, along a wide front, disbelief has won a victory. Let us not deceive ourselves about that. Disbelief has lifted the attractive standard of revolt and has gained millions of adherents. It is taken for granted among wide areas of intellectuals. One entire nation has gone over to it. Irreligion sits enthroned in places of power. We no longer have to guess what thoroughgoing disbelief will mean. We can see it all around us in personal character and social attitude, in its philosophy of life and its ethical result. As a consequence, many religious people are sorely discouraged. I am not. For one thing, this revolt of the disbelievers was well deserved. It has brought to bear upon our creeds and churches a justified criticism. It has forced intelligent believers to reëstablish their lines on more defensible grounds. But, more than that, it is handing over to us the advantage of revolt. Now we are the rebels—against irreligion. Once our discipleship to Jesus might have meant a fairly contented acceptance and defense of ways of thinking and living familiar in our family and community. Not now. Up into the places of power, out into the thinking of our time, filling our literature with cynicism, our personal living with futility, our public life with downright paganism, moves triumphant disbelief. Some of us hate it. All that seems to us most precious in life is threatened by it. All that makes life most worth living may be crushed under it. Our Christianity no longer may be the defense of the status quo. We are in rebellion against a pagan world ruled by irreligion.

My friends, let us capitalize that situation! We might make being a Christian exciting again if we would do that.

Indeed, this is the kind of situation in which Christianity began. At first the Christian movement was a revolt. The New Testament is a book of insurrection against a heathen world. "We wrestle," said Paul, "against

principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Christianity at the beginning was no supporter of a status quo. Such an idea never would have released in those first disciples the power which turned the world upside down. They were rebels against a pagan world. Today their times return to us again.

In the first place, we had better join the revolt against irreligion because of what we see irreligion doing to personal morale. The primary effect of disbelief is to disturb not morals but morale. For while there are many motives which may conspire to make a man an atheist in opinion and yet a charming and reliable character in human relationships, there is no way, so far as I can see, by which a man can become genuinely irreligious without lowering his enthusiasm about living, his estimate of the essential worth, meaning, and dignity of life, and so lowering his morale.

On a college campus where a friend of mine was going to speak, a questionnaire was circulated in order to discover the problems which the students most wished might be discussed. What do you suppose was the towering question on that campus? Has life any meaning at all and, if so, what is it? Think of a group of privileged American youth, far above the average in intellectual opportunity, played upon in a thousand ways by prevalent irreligion so that they were wondering if life has any meaning at all!

If you say that those young men and women had everything that science could tell them about life, of course they had! But science alone does not give life meaning. Science does two things. First, it gives us a new quantitative description of the world in terms of mathematical measurement and a new sequential description of the world in terms of cause and effect. It thus presents us with a marvelous new picture of the world. But this quantitative and sequential picture of the world does not tell us what it means. What it means to us is determined by our philosophy of life, by our ideas of what the supreme values are for which a man might well live and die, by our deep, interior religion. In the second place, science gives us not only a new description of the world but a new power over it. Science harnesses the latent resources of the universe and puts the reins into our hands, saying, Drive them. But that does not tell us where to drive them or why we should bother to drive them at all or whether our existence on this planet has such meaning that it is a good thing to have science confer on us such power. Once more all *that* comes from deeper levels of the soul than science ever gets its hands on, from our interior attitudes to life's whole meaning—from our religion.

Here, then, are groups of privileged American youth, possessing all the things we can put into their hands and all the truth science can put into their minds, stripped by irreligion of this deeper matter without which nothing else gets us anywhere, and wondering whether life has any meaning. That is an intolerable situation. Certainly it is a prevalent situation. And it will become more and more prevalent so long as irreligion triumphs.

My friends, intelligent Christianity is fighting no sham battle. This is a real conflict with tremendous issues at stake. Heaven have mercy on a nation whose most privileged youth, with everything that culture and education

can give them, stand upon the threshold of their lives wondering whether life has any meaning at all!

Consider how we got into this situation. While religion was in the ascendency, irreligion started out to smash it, and the irreligionists enjoyed trying to smash it. They undertook to overthrow the idea of God, the idea of immortality, the idea of any purpose in the universe, the idea of any more permanent meaning in man than there is in the animals, until they left us merely transient physical organisms with some interesting psychological by-products fortuitously evolved upon this planet.

So long as religion was here to revolt against, the irreligionists enjoyed their rebellion. They had an aim in life—to smash religion. They may have taught people that there is no purpose in the universe, but they had a purpose—to deny purpose in the universe. So, with the zest and enthusiasm of revolt, they went out to overthrow religion. Now, however, they face the aftermath. In wide areas their rebellion has succeeded. The idols they went out to smash are broken down. They find themselves agreed with on every side: no God, no immortality, no purpose in the universe. So far as the company they move in is concerned, they live in an utterly irreligious world. What then?

No one could better describe "what then" than Mr. Walter Lippmann. He is an authority upon this situation because his opinions correspond with it. He says that the most distinguishing element of the present generation is not their rebellion against religion but their disillusionment with their rebellion. Quite so! Who can forget the searching phrases with which Mr. Lippmann describes the situation: "perplexed by the consequences of their own irreligion"; "having lost their faith, they have lost the certainty that their lives are significant, and that it matters what they do with their lives"; "brave and brilliant atheists who have defied the Methodist God and have become very nervous"; "young men and women who are world-weary at twenty-two"; "we have succeeded only in substituting trivial illusions for majestic faiths"? So!

I prophesy a revolt against all that. I think the revolt already has begun. I wish the church were better fitted to take advantage of it. Christianity can be reborn if she will only see how indispensable this revolt is. Life cannot go on without spiritual meaning. We can go on without automobiles and airplanes. We can live on a dollar a day if we have to, but if life has no aim, no direction, no purpose, if there is no essential and abiding meaning in it, then it is dust and ashes to our taste.

One of our literary critics wrote some time ago in a letter to a friend: "People like myself have got to fake a direction finally, we can't go on forever being bright or smart or naughty young things." That is what irreligion has done to millions. It has made them fake a direction to life because they could not find one.

Again, we had better join this revolt against irreligion because of the substitutes which always come when religion goes. It is not impossible in wide areas of human life to destroy everything ordinarily called religion, but it is impossible to destroy the profound human needs which religion has helped to meet. As Wells says, an atheist has a God-shaped blank at his heart. Now, when a generation has a God-shaped blank at its heart, something comes to fill it. For example, when the dis-

believers began to discover that they might get rid of God and that therefore they must put something in his place, they began glorifying man. What else could they do? O marvelous man, they said in effect, the highest object of devotion we have left, quite able to solve all your problems and to meet all your needs on this planet, wanting nothing higher than yourself! They quoted with approval Walt Whitman's line, "Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful than myself." Wide ranges of disbelief today present this interesting spectacle: man denying God and so inevitably becoming his own God, the only God he has.

How everlastingly true are the words of Amiel! "They think they can do without religion; they do not know that religion is indestructible, and that the question is simply, Which will you have?" Every time man loses one kind of religion he gets a substitute. As for belief in God, it is plain now, not simply in the logic of the case but in observable fact around us, that whenever man stops worshiping something higher than himself he begins worshiping himself. Look out, then, on this crazy, chaotic, tempest-tossed world today! Tell me honestly what you think about this spectacle of man worshiping himself. Gamaliel Bradford was not much of a believer but, facing this spectacle, he put into a whimsical and irreverent quatrain something which I suppose even a disbeliever might join in:

> I sometimes wish that God were back
> In this dark world and wide,
> For though some virtues he might lack,
> He had his pleasant side.

Just so!

Indeed, if we wish to see what it means to deny God and to have man his own God, we need not guess any more. It is out in the open now in the confessions of many men and women who have gone through the process—men like Theodore Dreiser, the novelist, saying, "Whatever man does is something that can only prolong the struggles and worries and for the most part futile dreams of those with whom he finds himself companioned here in this atomic or cellular welter. . . . In short, I catch no meaning from all I have seen, and pass quite as I came, confused and dismayed"; men like Clarence Darrow, saying that the outstanding fact about human life is "the futility of it all." "It is possible," he says, "that no life is of much value, and that every death is little loss" to the world.

One could go on for hours quoting men like these, who have gone through the process of losing God and finding man his own God. Mark it! these men have brains and character; they are our intellectuals; they have ability; their lives are full of interests which ought to make life worth living. My word! If irreligion does this to such men, what will it do to the great mass of the people if at last irreligion triumphs and they find themselves in that blind alley, that cul de sac, where man has no God but himself.

Indeed, what do these pictures in the newspapers mean with countless thousands of youths saluting the absolute, nationalistic state? For one thing, such pictures mean plainly that human beings do not most of all want comfort. Man wants not so much comfort as excitement. Put before any healthy youth two paths, one of which leads to comfort and the other of which leads to excitement, and almost inevitably he will take the second path. That is why Admiral Byrd, when he heads into the

Antarctic, could have almost the whole younger generation with him if only he would take them. How, then, does man find excitement in life? Oh, by having something to live for, to give oneself to, to bestow loyalty upon, to stand before, saying, as it were, "My Lord and my God!" Nobody begins to understand how thrilling life can be until he has known that experience. On this point Paul is right whether in Athens or anywhere else: "In all things I perceive that ye are very religious."

Now, millions today, some in this country and many elsewhere, are taking that attitude toward the absolute, nationalistic state. It is a substitute religion. It has its dogmas, its rituals, its symbols, and its sacraments. At the heart of it is this tremendous matter: the utter devotion of millions of souls to the nationalistic god. Where do you think that substitute god will bring us out? He will tear our world into bloody pieces and make our children's earth a hell.

The old ministers used to do something which they called preaching up the revival. I wish I could do it now. Never in history was there a time when it was more needed. When one regards our present world, one does not, indeed, call for emotional mob-psychology, but one does call for a revival of sober thoughtfulness. The only thing that can overthrow these substitute gods is the real God. I know the church's failures in representing him in thought and life; judgment does indeed begin at the house of God. But now, rebelling against that old organized religion, irreligion triumphs. It thinks it is getting rid of God. See what it is really doing—letting in a whole troop of substitute gods. The pagan deities are coming back again: Mars, Venus, Bacchus, Mercury.

Finally, we had better join this revolt against irreligion because of what it is doing on every side to our interior, spiritual resources. It always has seemed logical to expect that with the loss of Christian faith there would come a corresponding loss of inward reserves of power and adequacy for living. For whatever may be your opinion about details of creed and church, this basic, psychological fact stares us in the face: men cannot use more spiritual power than they believe themselves to possess.

Now, Christian faith always has persuaded those who deeply understood it that there are immense reserves of spiritual power available for daily living. Christian faith teaches us that we are not pools, easily exhausted, but rivers down whose channels can flow a greater power than our own, so that our strength is not so much *in* us as *through* us, and if we keep the upper fountains open there are no small limits around the power which may be released through us. The New Testament fairly sings with this consciousness of spiritual reserves so that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us, and its pages are peopled with folk who through faith found those two things without which no life can be well lived, stimulus and stability. From the most ancient literature still extant to the last man whose interior problems you know, is there any deeper need revealed than for stimulus and stability?

It always has been logical, I say, to think that with the loss of Christian faith there would come a corresponding loss in this belief in and awareness of deep interior resources. Today, however, one need no longer rely upon what may seem logical; one can see this loss actually taking place, all the way from earlier disbelievers, like Thomas Hardy

describing his substitute for God,

. . . the dreaming, dark, dumb Thing
That turns the handle of this idle Show!

to brilliant atheists in our own day like Krutch, suspecting that man is no more significant than an insect that crawls from one annihilation to another. Walk around that idea of life for a while and see how much stimulus and stability are there.

Consider now that all this time during which irreligion thus has been creeping in upon us and depressing our adequacy for life, life itself has not been getting any easier. Not by a long sea-mile! One Sunday morning in this city a journalist at the end of his moral and practical resources went into a drug-store, bought a deadly poison, and started out to find a convenient place in a park where he could drink it and die. Passing, however, a church with a crowd before it, his journalistic instinct got the better of him and he decided that before committing suicide he would go inside and see what the crowd was all about. After the service he left the church, threw the poison down a manhole, took a day or two to pull himself together, and then came to see me and start on a new life. For that man's sake I am glad that he did not, on that Sunday, run into a protagonist of irreligion. Suppose that instead of presenting to him the Christian faith I had told him that there was no God, no purpose in the universe, that he came from nothing, signified little, and was going nowhither. What a devastating philosophy to present to a man who is up against it!

Well, in this generation do you know anybody who, one way or another, sooner or later, is not up against it? There are old stories of beggars and cripples banished from the streets on the coronation days of kings and queens lest their presence spoil the festival. O protagonist of irreligion, you had better thus banish troubled spirits on the day when you enthrone disbelief in this world, for you have no message for them, no power to put into them, no hope to hold ahead of them. I think I hate your irreligion most of all for this, that in a day when men desperately need heart you take it out of them.

So the revolt is on against you. You have had your innings long enough. Indeed, friends of mine who have not visited the sanctuary much for a decade begin to see it. "There is reason," says Stuart Chase, "to believe that the period of cynicism and moral frustration caused by the war is drawing to its close. Youth is beginning to believe in something again." So may God grant!

PRAYER

Eternal Spirit, Who without our asking it hast ushered us into this great generation with its chaotic circumstances and its tremendous issues, help us to measure up to the need of our time. In the spirit of our Lord. Amen.

Dr. Fosdick preached the foregoing sermon on February 25, 1934.

Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Eternal Spirit, deep within us but far beyond us, Who inhabitest eternity but dwellest also with him that is of an humble and a contrite heart, we Thy children come into Thine outward sanctuary knowing that no outward sanctuary can content us. Build Thou Thy temple in our hearts. There let Thy presence come, Thy guidance shine, Thy spirit be luminous! There may thanksgiving rise and penitence be genuine. Thy children bow, waiting for the voice that saith, Know ye not that ye are the temples of the living God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?

O God, other and evil things have dwelt in us. Our hearts are the habitations of many wayward moods, unkind feelings, and unclean spirits. We acknowledge that it lies not within the power of our volition to drive them out but if Thou wouldest come in, O Spirit of the highest, they would go hence.

Teach us the secret of overcoming our worst with Thy best and of being rid of darkness by letting light in. Grant us, therefore, receptivity and responsiveness. Let doors be opened and windows unshuttered in our souls. Drive off fear before faith and cowardice before courage. May short views be overpassed by long looks. Empower Thy children that they may go again into the world of baffling problems and bewildering circumstance to be more than conquerors.

Especially, cleanse those intimate channels of our close human relationships lest anything there should prevent Thy coming. From all uncharitableness, bitterness, vindictiveness, good Lord, deliver us. May home life be fairer, friendship steadier, and all the dear and homely fellowships of life—childhood and parenthood and brotherhood—more lovely because we have worshiped here.

We lift before Thee the wider concerns of our hard-bestead humanity. All is not well with Thy fair world, which we men and women have made so unbeautiful. We have broken the laws of health and we are ill. We have hurled ourselves over the precipice of Thy commandments and we are shaken. Grant unto us a better mind and a clearer conscience. Grant to the President of the republic and all those associated with him in counsel wise minds and courageous wills, and around them build up the whole body of the commonwealth that in these troubled days we may take prudent courses and come to saving ends. And through the world at large, where war stalks, O Christ, walk Thou also in the hearts of Thy people, lest our eyes look again upon a dismembered world drenched in fraternal blood.

Now come Thou to each of us one by one. Cross Thou the inner secret thresholds. Steady us in our temptations. Comfort us in our griefs. Give us eyes to see where we do not know the way. Let the low within us sink; let the high rise. Make visible on the mountains that surround us the horses and chariots of fire. We ask it in the spirit of Christ. Amen.

Dr. Frederick W. Norwood

DURING August and for the first Sunday in September, The Riverside Church is to have as its guest preacher the Rev. Frederick W. Norwood, of the City Temple, London, England. Wickham Steed, Editor of the *London Review of Reviews* and formerly editor of the *London Times,* said concerning Dr. Norwood: "You could not hear a truer representative of all that is best in British religious thought and endeavor. . . . Throughout the country his voice has been heard and his physical presence seen and felt, and no one who has heard his voice or felt his presence can remain indifferent to them. I look upon him as one of the greatest moral assets of the British people." Viscount Cecil of Chatwood, British representative on the League of Nations Council, said: "Dr. Norwood's work in this country on behalf of peace has been invaluable and I trust that all friends of peace will give him a true welcome."

Dr. Norwood's visit to New York City this summer marks the close of a tour of the world to which he has been giving himself this year. Dr. and Mrs. Norwood began their itinerary in South Africa, going from Cape Town to Rhodesia, and from the east coast of Africa to India. His reception in India, China, and Japan was overwhelming. Vast audiences met him in every hall and church where he spoke.

From Tokyo, under date of March 5, comes this word: "No religious event in Japan has been of more significance during the past month or for many months than the visit of Dr. F. W. Norwood, pastor of the City Temple in London, and Mrs. Norwood. Few such eloquent and fiery evangels of the spiritual life are heard in these parts; and it is also a delight to listen again to one who dares to speak frankly, even if tactfully, about the moral aspects of economic and political incidents of recent days in this and other lands. Though stopping only ten days in Japan, Dr. Norwood spoke widely in Kobe, Kyoto, and Tokyo environs."

In Shanghai they said of him: "Our most distinguished recent visitor was Dr. Frederick Norwood of City Temple, London. His fearless challenge of the existing economic and political

(*Continued on page 177*)

Veere

By Kamiel Lefévere

(The Seventh in a Series of Articles on "Singing Towers")

. . . . Suddenly, hush!
A flock of bird notes with wings
Tumble into the gathering dusk . . . .
Harold W. Melvin

The first impression of Veere, from the far distance, is a complete sketch of line and color, depicting peace and rest, which is so very characteristic of the smaller cities of Holland. The daintiness of its Singing Tower, rising from between the old gables and home-feeling red roofs, gives the effect of a warm invitation from an old friend.

The approach to this quaint little town, which lies a few miles to the north of Middelburg, in the province of Zeeland, representing a most attractive group of picturesque little islands, presents a characteristic Dutch landscape to complete perfection. The massive church, the slender townhall, some dainty roofs, the quiet little harbor with its colorful fishing-boats and leisurely moving fishermen along the grey-bluish waterfront, the solid windmill with its beautiful, though discolored wings, suggest trust and stability. The faint tinkling of the bells is like a pastel-colored message of friendly welcome.

In the old tribunal building in the town is, among other relics, the famous Cup of Veere, presented to the town by Maximilian of Burgundy. Veere also was once the seat of the Scottish wool staple, established for centuries, and to which it owed its richness and prosperity. The marriage of one of the Lords of Veere with Maria Stuart, daughter of Jacob the First, King of Scotland, was responsible for bringing the Scottish traders to Veere.

The impression the church makes is one of power and strength. This building was started in the fourteenth century and construction operations were intermittent for many centuries thereafter under various architects, among whom was the famous Antoon Keldermans the elder, from Mechlin (Mechelen), who was also the builder of the celebrated townhall at Middelburg.

But Veere was unable to carry this work through. The actual height of the church tower is only one-third of what it was intended to be. The few remnants of splendor and wealth in this church were destroyed by fire in the seventeenth century, just prior to the coming of Napoleon with his army. He used it as a hospital and as a stable for the horses and barracks for the soldiers. The inside underwent such changes that all resemblance to a church disappeared and for long years afterwards it remained as a barracks.

The townhall, on the contrary, is a structure of great beauty which was started in 1470 and finished in 1474. It is of the same type as the Middelburg townhall, which is the perfection of sixteenth century Gothic, but of a more modest character.

The carillon, located in the tower of the townhall, consists of thirty-six bells. Most of the larger bells were cast by Andreas Van den Gheyn, and a few

VEERE

TOWN HALL

AND

CARILLON

FROM ACROSS

THE EAST SCHELDE

others by Pieter Van den Gheyn, dating 1735 and 1790. Both of the Van den Gheyns belong to the old family of famous bellfounders of Mechelen (Malines), and Leuven (Louvain), whose descendants back in 1554 were already known as good bellfounders.

This carillon, which is kept in per-

(*Continued on page 177*)

Pioneers in American Music

HAROLD VINCENT MILLIGAN

Organist, The Riverside Church

(Used by courtesy of The American Scholar, Phi Beta Kappa Quarterly

IN the heavenly world to come, when the mighty shall be cast down from their seats and the humble and meek shall be exalted, I like to think there will be a little special Paradise set aside for those artistic souls whose earthly pilgrimage was beset with such rocky pavements and such thorny obstructions that they never arrived even within sight of their goal. We shall find there those mute inglorious Miltons, those potential geniuses who never groped their way to ultimate self-expression, those flowers that wasted their sweetness on the desert air or perhaps never produced a blossom. We shall find there a large delegation of early American musicians whose very names are now known only to a few painstaking historians and whose sum of artistic achievement is so pitifully small as to be practically negligible. Chief among them will be Stephen Foster, whose over-sweet melodies and kindergarten harmonies will never procure him admission into the Valhalla of the truly great. And there will be also those lonely souls whose artistic instincts and futile strivings never found a worldly audience, for there was no audience to find.

In order to understand their lives and correctly to estimate their achievements it is necessary to consider the very peculiar circumstances in which they lived. To one who has not lived in a primitive community this is difficult —hence the misunderstanding which many Europeans of the present day still have about musical conditions in America. Indeed I am inclined to think that it is impossible for any European, accustomed to a civilization and cultural background centuries old, to realize what the phrase "primitive conditions" really means. I have been in primitive communities in the far West and I know what the word "pioneer" means. I have some conception of what my forefathers experienced and just what it meant, that slow process of taming the wilderness, generation after generation pushing out to new land and new life, cutting down the trees, building the first log houses, pulling up the roots and hauling away the stones to put the first plow into the virgin soil, straining every nerve and every muscle for the bare necessities of life, food, shelter, warmth, and then slowly achieving a few simple comforts. In the summer when I drive my car through the Naugatuck Valley, or along the Connecticut River where it winds between the green hills of New Hampshire and Vermont, and go back in imagination to those days when the rivers led from tide-water off into the unknown forest like beckoning fingers, I cannot help but speculate as to what happened to those unhappy personalities who were endowed by unkind nature with what we call "artistic temperament."

Born they certainly were. It would be idiotic to suppose that pioneer babies were all Daniel Boones. Some of them

may have been Franz Schuberts or John Keatses. Suppose Claude Debussy had been born and brought up in Poker Flat or Dead Man's Gulch? Would he have written "L'Apres Midi d'un Faun"? It would be comfortable to believe that Ludwig Beethoven was born into the very center of European musical culture because that was the only place in which his musical genius could develop to its greatest, and that Johnnie Brook was born in Last Hope, Arizona, because that was jolly well good enough for him, but I cannot accept so smug a conception of this sorry world. I can't help feeling a furtive sympathy for Johnnie Brook, even if his musical achievements consist of playing the fiddle very badly and drinking more than is good for him. Suppose George Frederick Handel had been born in Braintree, Massachusetts, in 1735, had never heard an orchestra, had never known anyone who knew or cared anything at all about music, had been able to learn in a laborious lifetime only the vaguest notions of musical theory. You would say, "Then he wouldn't have been George Frederick Handel," and you are quite right. But he might have been William Billings.

We know what happened to a musical genius born in Pittsburgh in 1826. Stephen Foster's life in the middle of the nineteenth century is a sad story of tragic maladjustment. Imagination can outline only vaguely the sufferings and blind gropings of those earlier musicians whose instincts and temperaments were so largely at variance with their surroundings and the life of their times. Like Helen Keller they were cut off from contact with what to them should have been the real world, but unlike her they were left alone in their isolation. What intense and glowing devotion it required for these early American musicians to persevere amidst such unmusical and in some cases antimusical surroundings! If we honor the heroism of the venturesome pioneers let us also honor the courage of those brave souls who followed the flickering gleam of an ideal they themselves but dimly understood.

In the colonial period the American musician faced not only the rigorous limitations of pioneer life but also the distinct hostility of the Puritan attitude toward the arts. This was especially true in New England, where the hatred of the arts, which was rampant in England, persisted in its most virulent form. The southern colonies, where many of the royalists, or cavaliers, settled, were less hostile to the artist. But music played a very lowly part in the Puritan scheme of things. At the time of the great revolution in England, when King Charles had to make way for the Lord Protector, the Puritans destroyed organs and music-books, dissolved church choirs, and chased musicians from the organ galleries. The fine art of the English contrapuntists was abandoned and the singing of psalm-tunes in unison was set up in its place. The Puritan, having been taught to look upon music as a frivolous thing, fashioned by the evil designs of the Tempter, naturally shrank with horror from an occupation which might bring upon his soul everlasting punishment after death. The adaptation of a few simple psalm-tunes caused him much religious scruple; in fact he would never have had any music at all in the church service (which represented community life to him) except for the fact that the Old Testament states unmistakably that the Hebrews used music and psalms in their religious worship,

thus proving that the singing of psalms was agreeable to, and even commended by the Heavenly Father.

In 1673 a book was published in London entitled *Observations of aTraveller* which contained the statement that "in Boston there are no musicians by trade. A dancing-school was set up but afterwards put down and the dancing-master fined £10 (ten pounds)." A dancing school must have meant some musical instrument, possibly a spinet, but musical instruments were extremely rare in the colonies at this date. Just when the first spinets, viols, and flutes came over is not known. Examination of many inventories which have been preserved from the latter half of the seventeenth century fails to discover any record of a musical instrument. Every pot, skillet, gridiron, article of wearing apparel, chair, table, bed, bolster, pillow, silver spoon, pewter dish, is enumerated, but no lutes, harpsichords, or other musical instruments are mentioned.

But even the sternest of the Puritans could not entirely suppress the natural aspirations of the human heart and the "frivolous art" of music would not down. There were, or course, but few native musicians, as indeed there were but few native-born in any trade or profession. Most of these musical pioneers were Englishmen who ventured across the ocean in pursuit of fortune and who spent their lives planting the seeds of musical culture in the inhospitable soil of the New World. They were of necessity "general practitioners," playing the organ and the harpsichord, teaching these and other instruments, organizing concerts, composing and publishing music—turning their hands to any occupation of a musical nature by which a few honest dollars might be earned and their names advanced in public esteem.

Although there were a few choirs to be found in the city churches in 1750 and even earlier, they were not common in the churches until about the time of the Revolution. These choirs came into existence in those churches which adopted psalm-tune books with printed music. Members of the congregation who could read music or who were interested to learn, naturally gathered together and in some places were assigned a special place in the gallery, a custom still surviving in many churches.

As the adoption of psalm-books containing printed notes made singing-schools and choirs inevitable, so the choirs prepared the way for the introduction of organs, although the instrument did not find a welcome from the Puritan congregations at first. The representatives of the Established Church were more hospitable to music and the first instruments were to be found in them rather than in the "dissenting chapels." Since many of these early instruments were deficient in pedal notes, the bass was frequently reinforced by a cello or double bass.

The first organ used in a church service in America seems to have been the famous "Brattle organ," used in King's Chapel, Boston, in 1713. Some years previously it had been imported from England by Thomas Brattle, a wealthy Bostonian, for his own home, and in his death it was bequeathed to Brattle Square Church; but that conservative congregation rejected it with some indignation and it was thereupon, in accordance with the terms of the will, presented to King's Chapel. The vestry of that church next proceeded to procure from England "a sober person to play skilfully on the organs (sic) with a

loud noise." The "person" thus selected was a "Mr. Price." Whether he was lacking in sobriety or in skill the records do not state, or perhaps he found it impossible to make a living in Puritanical Boston, but at any rate in the following year (1714) the vestry of King's Chapel was again called upon to bring over another "sober" organist from England. (Why did these eighteenth century congregations insist that the organist be sober?)

New York did not possess its first organ until 1727, when the Dutch Church was presented by Governor Burnet with a small imported organ. Trinity Church joined the procession in 1741 with a three-manual organ with twenty-six registers.

Meanwhile the organ had been finding its way into churches elsewhere and more organists had to be imported. After the Brattle organ the second organ to be used in church in New England appears to have been the one presented to Trinity Church, Newport, Rhode Island, by Bishop Berkeley. This was in 1733, twenty years after the Brattle bequest and eight years before the first instrument in Trinity Church, New York. The Newport organ was for many years considered the finest instrument in America and it was noted not only for its tone but also for its beautiful case, which was of English oak, with twenty-three gilded pipes across the front, the whole surmounted by a crown supported by two mitres. In spite of the fame of the instrument it was often difficult to secure an organist, a condition which was perhaps partly due to the fact that the salary at times did not exceed one dollar a Sunday.

In 1746 the Moravian Church in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, purchased an organ and in 1752 an entertainment for Governor Hamilton in Bethlehem included organ music, with string and wind instruments. A similar musical program was given for General Washington in 1782. In his account of his travels in North America in 1780 the Marquis de Chastellux, who came to this country with the French army, referred to the organ playing of Jacob Van Vliet in Bethlehem. The Marquis told how Van Vliet performed on the organ in the Brethren's House, playing "some Voluntaries in which he introduced a great deal of harmony and progressions in the bass."

Most of the early musicians came from England, but John Henry Schmidt, who became organist of St. Peter's Church in Philadelphia in 1797, was announced as "organist of the great church of Schiedam, Holland." Another Dutch musician who settled in America was Peter Albrecht Von Hagen who came to Charleston, South Carolina, as "organist and director of City Concerts in Rotterdam."

The European musicians who crossed the ocean to the far-away colonies during the course of the eighteenth century were not all church organists, although circumstances in the new country often forced them to musical occupations far removed from their own training or desire. Secular music, including a feeble flicker of concert life and various opera companies, eked out a precarious existence, chiefly in the "cities" of the Middle Colonies, such as Annapolis, Philadelphia, and Charleston, rather than in Puritanical New England. Doubtless these early musicians, especially those who were used to more favorable conditions in the old country, often felt inclined to give way to discouragement and despair as did John

Owen Jacobi, who was at one time organist at Trinity Church, Newport. In spite of the fact that he played upon the best organ in America he wrote to a friend in England:

> The want of instruments, together with the Niggardliness of the people in this Place, and their not having a taste for Musick, render it impossible for anyone of my profession to get a competent maintenance here and the Feuds and Animosities are so great concerning their Government that a Man can take but little Satisfaction in being among them, so that it is no better than burying oneself alive.

(*To be continued in the August Church Monthly*)

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DR. FREDERICK W. NORWOOD

(*Continued from page 170*)

systems as war-breeders drew large and appreciative audiences. He not only punctured these systems most vigorously and eloquently, but he also radiated the hope that forces are at work for the betterment of conditions in the world in general and in the religious life in particular. His message is modern but thoroughly theistic and dauntless."

News has just reached us in America of Dr. Norwood's unanimous election to the presidency of the Free Church Council of Great Britain and Wales, an office held previously by British leaders like Dr. John Clifford and Dr. Hugh Price Hughes.

We take particular pleasure in welcoming Dr. Norwood to the pulpit of The Riverside Church especially during the weeks when the Summer School is in session. We are happy to be the medium through which Dr. Norwood will speak to the City of New York on these Sunday mornings and to our friends from over the country who will be attending the Summer School.

In addition to the morning service in The Riverside Church Dr. Norwood's New York City engagements include a service at St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, at 4:00 o'clock on August 12th and an appointment with Union Theological Seminary from August 13th to 17th.

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The frontispiece this month is a reproduction of the Hofmann canvas "Christ in the Temple" which is in the Assembly Hall. This particular canvas was painted in 1871, shortly after the completion of the original by Hofmann. The canvas which we have was done in Mr. Hofmann's studio under his direction by his students and colleagues. He himself closely supervised the work and did some of it, particularly on the faces, with his own hand. The original now hangs in the Royal Gallery at Dresden, Germany.

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WANTED—Back numbers of THE CHURCH MONTHLY. If you have a copy for May, June, September of 1927 or January of 1928, we would be glad to have you send it to the church to fill out the file in Dr. Carder's office.

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(*Continued from page 172*)

fect condition, is still sending out its message, singing its melodies automatically every hour and half-hour, like a great majestic music-box, bringing to the whole community life an atmosphere of peace and rest.

WHY NOT REMEMBER *The Church Monthly* IN YOUR TRAVELS? THIS INTERESTING POSTCARD CAME FROM OUR GOOD FRIEND, CHARLES G. TUBBS, FORMER EDITOR OF *The Church Monthly*, WHOSE BUSINESS IN RECENT YEARS HAS MADE HIM A WORLD TRAVELER

BATTLESHIPS AND CRUISERS AT ANCHOR IN THE HUDSON, AS SEEN FROM RIVERSIDE PARK, OPPOSITE THE CHURCH

A Challenge to Christians

THE Jewish people in America are conducting a campaign throughout the country for funds to assist in the care of refugees coming out of Germany. They are working in close co-operation with James G. McDonald, High Commissioner for Refugees Coming From Germany. "The American Christian Committee" is attempting to arouse the interest of Christian people in connection with the sorely distressed groups who have been forced out of their homeland. Many of the refugees are not Jews, but Christians. But for the liberal attitude of the Jewish Committee their plight would have been far worse than it is. The money raised from Jewish sources, however, has been used indiscriminately on behalf of all refugees, whether Jewish or Christian. Up to the present time there has been almost no response on the part of Christian people in America to the appeal of the Committee.

The following is a letter from Mr. James G. McDonald, the High Commissioner, addressed to Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, Chairman of the American Christian Committee for German Refugees:

"Dear Dr. Cadman:

"It is encouraging upon my return again from Europe to learn of the efforts which you and your committee have been making in the interest of the refugees from Germany. I suppose the average American simply cannot realize that 20 per cent of these unfortunates who have been catapulted from comparative social security into penury and ostracism are Christian clergymen, professors, writers, lecturers, doctors, and the like. They are not communist agitators. The offence charged against Christian refugees is that they have stood uncompromisingly for the very things which Christian Americans, Catholic or Protestant, prize most.

"Since I was last in New York I have made a trip to some of the chief refugee centres—Vienna, Prague, Warsaw, Stockholm, and Copenhagen,—and have had an opportunity to talk with the leaders of groups in Amsterdam and Brussels. I am more convinced than ever that the need for funds from Christian sources is urgent. In Prague I found that 40 per cent of the refugees are Christians, and the work of caring for them is very ably conducted by a Committee headed by a Jewish woman. In Holland the Jewish Committee is spending 1,000 guilders a month for the relief of non-Jewish refugees. The secretary of that Committee said to me recently —'I do not know what we shall do if some money does not soon come from Christian sources.'

"Had it not been for what the Jews have given, even the little relief made available for the non-Jewish refugees would have been impossible. I go back now, hoping that at last the great heart of Christian America will be touched and its compassion find expression in practical ways.

"Yours sincerely
(Signed) "James G. McDonald"

Contributions to this cause may be sent to Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York, checks to be made payable to Henry L. Smithers, Treasurer.

The situation which Mr. McDonald and the American Committee face constitutes a very real challenge to the Christians in America, a challenge which is inherent in the deplorable plight of refugees and a challenge which is emphasized by the more than generous attitude of Jewish people in America toward the Christians who are among the sufferers.

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THE PACE KEEPS UP

"Nothing ever happens in a city church in the summer time," we have been led to say in connection with church work in New York. There is more truth than poetry, so to speak, in the observation. People have summer homes to which they repair along in May or June and as they grow older they are inclined to go to the country earlier and stay later. Two allegiances grow up among them. They have a city house and a church in the city, too, which they consider to be their own. But there is a church in the country and they come to have an affection for it comparable to that which gathers around the church in the city. So it comes to pass that the two churches divide the pastoral responsibility for any given family. This situation has put a casual quality into the attitude of the city church during the summer months.

One of the things that we are most happy over and thankful for at The Riverside Church is the fact that, though our congregation takes its allotted time in the country, the summer months are far from being inactive. The sewing room, the employment service, the social service department, here at the church, are going full blast. Every day brings its quota of interviews, problems, of opportunities and privileges of service, which gives the minister and the church worker a sense of values to which the summer experiences of years gone by could not be compared. We exceedingly regret the social and economic situation which has so increased the load of human suffering over the past few years, but we are frank to admit that since suffering is around us we are grateful for the open door, the open mind, and the sympathetic heart of the Christian Church.

Handbook of the Institution and Its Building

This book deals with the institution and its program, the building, its architecture and symbolism, the details of the stained glass windows and of the carved stone being identified. It is a book of 127 pages, including 59 reproductions of photographs of the structure. In make-up and typography the book is one which you will wish to have in your possession and keep as a souvenir of the church. It is for sale at the Literature Table on Sunday mornings and in the vestibule throughout the week.

It usually sells for $1.00 a copy but the Trustees have authorized us to sell 1,000 at 50c a copy plus fifteen cents if you ask to have it mailed.